

REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION
FOR
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS



UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
NEW DELHI
1965

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INTRODUCTION

In most of the universities in the country there is considerable shortage of residential accommodation for students and teachers. This reduces to a considerable extent the fuller utilisation of educational benefits. There has not been a proper realisation of the influence of congenial surroundings on the development of the personality of student and quality of education imparted by a teacher nor has a planned and persistent effort seem to have been made towards this end. With a view to enlarging and improving facilities for residential accommodation in the universities, the University Grants Commission appointed a Committee with the following members to study the problem in all aspects and prepare a broad outline plan for consideration of the Commission :

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The Committee was requested to consider not only the requirements regarding hostels and staff quarters but also the role that should be played by halls of residence and the manner in which the halls should be administered and staffed in order to carry out their proper role. The other problem which the Committee was asked to look into was the possibility of providing library, reading rooms in hostels, steps to avoid over-crowding in hostels etc. The Committee met thrice on August 25, 1962 ; September 23, 1963 and March 24, 1964.

The questions referred to us cover a wide range of facilities for students and teachers. Their scope was clearly indicated to the committee by the Chairman, University Grants Commission at the first meeting of the committee held on August 25, 1962, and they were discussed in general terms at the meeting. An excellent summing up of the position we think, is found, in the address by the Chairman, University Grants Commission to the Vice-Chancellors Conference convened jointly by the University Grants Commission and the Ministry of Education in 1962. We take the liberty of quoting here the relevant portion of the address* :

It is necessary to give high priority to the provision of staff quarters and hostel accommodation. Apart from the student hostels it is important to make adequate provision for day-student-homes where they may have facilities for quiet study, and also, if possible, cheap meals. The reading rooms in libraries also need considerable expansion. It is essential that liberal provision be made for reading rooms in libraries and in student-homes (within the campus or outside) where they (students) can do a major part of their reading and home work. In the universities in U.K., libraries provide on an average (there is considerable variation from one university to another) reading places for about one-fourth of the total student population. In our case the need is far greater and the existing facilities are grossly inadequate. We should aim at providing within the next few years reading seats for about 20 per cent of our student population in the universities and colleges.

STUDENTS HOSTELS

General Background

2. The question of student hostels was examined by the panel on University Buildings appointed by the University Grants Commission in 1960. The Panel was mainly concerned with economical and efficient construction and worked out, with this purpose, norms of living space ancillary areas, sanitary and other facilities and so on. We shall turn to these recommendations later. It is, however, necessary to point out that even at that stage, the Panel had visualized raising hostel accommodation from 15 per cent to 20 per cent, on the basis of enrolment of 9,00,000 by the end of the Second and an expected enrolment of 13,00,000 by the end of the Third Plan, an expenditure of Rs. 17.16 crores during the Second, and Rs. 27.5 crores during the Third Plan. The panel, therefore, naturally observed that the provision of Rs. 3 crores made for this purpose in the second Plan "does not touch even the fringe of the problem". The situation, as it has developed since then, may now be briefly indicated. The annual report of the University Grants Commission for

* Vice-Chancellors' Conference, 1962, pp. 28-29.

the year 1961-62 states : "The total student enrolment in our universities and colleges during the year 1961-62 was 11,55,380, an increase of 1,07,532 over the previous year. This represents an increase of 11 per cent in the year as against 5 per cent in the previous year". Assuming this rate of increase to be the same for the year 1962-63, the total enrolment of 13,00,000 visualized by the Panel could be almost reached by the end of the third year of the Third Plan ; and the actual numbers at the end of the Plan are bound to be considerably higher, viz., over fifteen lakhs or so.

3. We are considering the problem not only as it is expected to develop in the remaining period of the Third Plan but also during the period of the Fourth Plan. It should be evident that the children who went to school in 1950 or 1951 entered the College in 1961-62 ; and those who started schooling in 1960 will do so in 1970-71 that is in the closing years of the Fourth Plan. That the expansion of both the primary and secondary stages has been very rapid during the decade 1950-60 is well known. It would, therefore, be necessary to expect the enrolment in colleges and universities to rise much faster during the coming years. We are likely to be confronted with almost "an explosion of numbers". Possibilities of diverting a portion of these numbers in the post-secondary non-university channels of training, apprenticeship schemes, or direct employment will also grow, but it is hardly possible to expect any major relief from these sources. Attraction of the university degree, on the other hand, may be expected to remain as strong as ever ; it might in effect become basic minimum, essential for employment in a large variety of fields, and the pressure on universities and colleges will rapidly grow. Yet another significant observation made in the aforesaid report of the University Grants Commission is also noteworthy : "An outstanding feature of the present quinquennium has been the rapid increase in the number of women students in our universities and colleges." This trend may also get more pronounced during the coming years with the result that provision of hostels for women students may not remain a peripheral problem as it has been in the past. Again, as the report points out, the number of post graduate students has almost doubled in five years. The special needs of this group, will, therefore, also demand increasing attention in the coming years.

4. There is a rapid growth of urbanisation with the result that land values in many of the centres of collegiate university education have also been mounting rapidly. Securing suitable sites for hostels is becoming almost impossible in some of these centres. It was also pointed out to us that where such sites are owned by the Government or Municipalities, the competing claims are numerous and allotment to educational institutions does not seem to have a high priority. On occasions, ground rents at a fairly high level are charged which thus

become a permanent charge on the current income of the institutions. The cost of construction is also going up. Scarcity of building materials often leads to delays in construction, thus widening the gap between original estimates and actual expenditure. We therefore, feel that the actual situation as it is developing is much worse than what the panel had anticipated and there seems to be, therefore, under present circumstance and with the resources now available a very limited hope of our being able to raise hostel accommodation significantly to provide for the increased percentage of students. In fact, maintenance of the present percentage itself will necessitate an enormous amount of expenditure in the context of growing enrolment. It is, therefore, obvious that much larger resources will have to be devoted for this purpose.

5. Growing congestion and a general deterioration of housing conditions especially for the middle and the lower income groups in our larger cities will increase the need for hostels. We are, however, aware that in many cases the parents or guardians may not be able to pay for this facility. Increasing geographical mobility of parents and the difficulties of migration of students from one place to another will also tend to raise the demand for hostels. Parents even today have to incur in many cases considerable expenditure on this count. The pull of the cities and especially of the metropolitan centres like Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras may also intensify the demand. It is however possible that the starting of more educational institutions in new Centres, many of which will be in rural area, will to some extent tend to reduce it. The picture is somewhat different in the rural area, that is, in the case of institutions in small towns, with a population of about ten to twenty-five thousand. The need in these cases is limited, but it is likely to be very acute in some cases due to the virtual absence of alternative accommodation. It should also be observed that the desire on the part of charitable organizations, Trusts etc. to provide students hostels has been less noticeable in the recent past and as a result the pressure on accommodation provided by colleges and universities has been growing continually. In the absence of data, it is difficult for us to go further into this question. It is not that private hostels have always been a healthy influence. In many cases they have been communal in character and have encouraged the growth of feelings which from the larger national point of view are hardly desirable. However such hostels in the past met a significant need.

6. Taking into consideration all these factors it is reasonable to conclude that we must endeavour at least to maintain the present proportion of students provided with hostel accommodation and, if possible, try to increase it in the years to come. Realising, even in the light of the limited increase in the enrolments which they visualized, the University Grants Commission panel in 1960 stated that this would be an almost impossible task. They, therefore, concluded ; "It is

imperative for the authorities concerned to economise as much as possible on the actual cost of construction and to see how far funds allocated for the purpose can be made to yield maximum results." Treatment of this aspect of the question in the Report of the Panel is quite elaborate and the Committee generally agrees with the conclusions arrived at by them. The norms of economical and efficient construction which the Panel suggested are reasonable and there has been no difference of opinion in the Committee about them excepting that the cost of construction will now be higher. We do not consider it necessary to cover the same ground again. We would, however, like to point out that the limitations on available resources leads to some other corollaries which are quite significant and should be recognised.

Value of Hostel Life

7. "A hostel" states the Panel, "is a residential unit for community living for a larger number of young men and women who are going to be responsible citizens of the future generation. The physical environments of these residences exert a powerful influence on the character and the attitudes of young people. It is therefore, essential that the planning and architectural expression of a hostel building should be most efficient, logical and pleasant for comfortable and cheerful living." It is also important that the building is so planned that it provides for quiet individual work and for the growth of proper community feeling. A hostel is not just a place for living; it is also an important centre of education. For most students there is no satisfactory substitute for a proper hall of residence if they are to participate fully in the education of the students by the students, which is one of the most important parts of university education. A group of young men and women coming from different background, both domestic and educational, are expected in hostels to imbibe the attitudes and qualities necessary for living together, and to participate in a significant measure in the efforts to organize some of the conditions and aspects of such communal living. Corporate living provides an invaluable training for the larger field of life which the students will eventually enter. It may be worthwhile quoting here the quinquennial Report of University Grants Committee, England.

"As compared with lodgings or with many homes, a hall affords an environment where intellectual interests are strong. It offers students exceptionally favourable opportunities for the stimulating interplay of mind with mind for the formation of friendship and for learning the art of understanding and living with others of outlook and temperament unlike their own. It can be and it often is, a great humanising force. Moreover in universities where so many students disperse immediately after the working day is done, the halls as continuous centres of corporate life, do something to stimulate that life in the university as a whole."

A hostel thus provides a significant component of the education of the growing generations. Students often learn much from each other than from their teachers ; and this educational truth can be realized in a large measure through living in the hostel. Its planning must be conducive to fulfilment of these ends and at the same time furnish adequate scope to the individual student to be by himself, alone, if he so desires.

8. We have to point out an additional consideration which largely holds good in the case of our undergraduate students. It is well-known that a large number of our young men and women enter Colleges and universities at a relatively immature age. The function of our universities *vis-a-vis* students is, therefore, not merely intellectual, it is also a quasi-parental function. Their growth during the initial period has to be guided and promoted in an intelligent and imaginative manner in order that they may develop in right time the appropriate attitudes and outlook. In the case of undergraduate-hostels, this becomes a matter of prime importance and has significant bearings on the size and organization of the hostel, its mode of functioning as also the nature of the activities, planned and carried out in it. This also indicates a difference between undergraduate and postgraduate students' residential accommodation and the problems arising from mixing of the two groups together. At the same time it is necessary to use hostel accommodation as a significant opportunity for enabling students to cultivate social sympathy, mutual respect and a wider outlook by organizing their activities in a proper manner under the guidance of wardens who themselves are successful teachers and naturally command respect. The different wards of the Hostel may be organised on the basis of 'Houses' or 'Fraternities' and healthy competition among these may be promoted by the Wardens or House Tutors attached to the Hostel.

Expansion and Improvement in Hostel Facilities

9. At times hostels are looked upon merely as places of residence and the educational aspects of hostel life are either not realised or are ignored. A tendency on the part of people of a certain caste or class or community to provide hostels for students of their own castes or class or community is also noticeable. Such hostels, instead of promoting educational ends and fostering a spirit of integration, are likely to work in the opposite direction.

10. Spread of secondary education has been responsible for creating aspiration for university education in many of our poor young men of rural areas. Many of them are too poor to live in the ordinary hostels. They are forced to live very unhealthy surroundings. Even if avenues of employment are found on account of which some of them do not join the universities, the number of this class of students will not decrease because of the rapid expansion of the base of secondary

education. Hence it is necessary to make some provision for students of this category. Some of the important lines of such improvement which we would strongly recommend may be summarised at this stage :

- (a) An attempt may be made to reduce the hostel fees through persuading the local authorities or Governments to grant exemption of ground rent, reduction in rates and taxes, etc., so far as hostels are concerned. Educational institutions naturally take these expenses into account in determining the fees that they charge to their students. The aforesaid steps will therefore facilitate reduction in the fees or rent charged for hostel accommodation.
- (b) Hostels in some cases are treated by State Governments as institutions which must meet out of their income their full expenditure on all counts. Expenditure on hostels is, therefore, not taken into account as an admissible item for determining the quantum of grants for colleges and universities. It is necessary to revise this attitude so as to enable the colleges and the universities to meet partly or fully the provisions on account of insurance, depreciation, etc., from grants received from the public authorities or State Governments. This is normally yet another charge on hostels which is sought to be recovered through the fees or rent charged to the students.
- (c) Action in respect of the above suggestions would bring down considerably the recurring expenditure on hostels. It will thus enable a large number of good students to join them, who, otherwise cannot afford to do so. Even after this is done, it is still likely that some good and deserving students, may be left out. In the case of such poor students, we believe that it should be possible to adjust the schedule of hostel fees in a way as can provide for rent free accommodation to them. Initially about 5 to 10 per cent of the students living in hostels may be given such free-ships. Such students could be selected on the basis of merit and the amount of concession or subsidy may be determined on the basis of the level of income of their parents or guardians.
- (d) Efforts should be made to provide hostel accommodation on a large scale, may be up to 75 per cent of the student population for institutions which attract students from all over the country. The possibility of granting financial aid to students in these hostels to cover all their expenses may also be explored. We feel that if this concession is not extended to such institutions they will lose their all-India character and the purpose for which they are set up would be defeated.

- (e) Experiments in distributing certain types of work among the students themselves on a remunerative basis may also be made in the hostels. We do not think it would be desirable to expect such work from these students alone who are given concessions of one kind or the other. Young men are generally more idealistically inclined than their elders imagine them to be and it should be possible to have work done by students who do not themselves directly need any financial assistance, but who are happy to have their remuneration put in a common pool for rendering assistance to their needy fellow students. A mutual assistance fund of this kind can be started in each hostel so that those who are in need may have a part of their expenditure met through this fund.
- (f) Every hostel should have as far as possible certain basic facilities apart from the dining rooms or halls. These will include essential care including provision for sick rooms, opportunities to congregate together for purposes other than intellectual or academic, provision for a few indoor games, reading room, etc.
- (g) Every hostel should have a common kitchen and a common mess. In this country the cooking of food and the variety as also the serving of meals always present a difficult problem which should be resolved gradually through common messes. The messing arrangements in every hostel should be organised on co-operative basis. Students should be encouraged to run their own mess so that they might get training in conducting such activities in an efficient and economic manner. Subsidy may be provided by institutions not merely in the form of accommodation but also some essential equipment and other facilities. Where possible messes should be run on a self-service basis.
- (h) Finance should be made available by the University Grants Commission for the renovation of existing hostel buildings so that they may more adequately meet some of the suggestions made above in regard to facilities for clean comfortable and healthy living.
- (i) In each hostel it may be possible to select a few senior students on the basis of their intellectual ability and personality traits to assist the warden in supervising life in the hostel, befriending junior students and giving them necessary guidance. In return for such services they may be given some remuneration which would reduce their financial burden. Even the possibility of appointing them as subwardens could be explored.

Hostel for Postgraduate Students

11. The need for hostels for postgraduate students arises for different reasons also. Because of the economic conditions of parents, a large number of students with average performance at the First Degree Examinations pursue postgraduate studies while doing jobs of one kind or the other. There is, however, a group of the better and brighter type who carry on their postgraduate education with a view eventually to entering one or the other of the professions including teaching or undertaking research. These students need, above all, a congenial environment and a quiet place for study. Many of them, like the undergraduates, come from family backgrounds which do not afford these facilities. Their work is quite heavy and strenuous with the result that an opportunity to live in a hostel would come to many of them as a real boon. In regard to these students it is the intellectual function of the university which is of greater importance than its *quasi*-parental role, and hostels have to be planned differently so as to provide adequate opportunities and a proper atmosphere to such students to carry on their chosen pursuits in a satisfactory manner.

Hostels in Rural Areas

12. It will be necessary to pay special attention to the rural areas in respect of hostels. Difficulties of rural housing underline this need ; and we strongly feel that the growth of collegiate institutions in rural areas all over the country demands that the problem of accommodation both for students and teachers in these areas should receive urgent attention. Hostels in rural areas will, however, present still greater difficulty in becoming self-sufficient in the financial sense. The need for subsidy to these hostels should be all the greater. We are of the view that suitable grants should be provided both by the State Governments as also by the University Grants Commission in tackling this problem. It is obvious that rural hostels can be used effectively for deriving the educational benefits of hostel life in a much larger measure. Land being easily available, construction of small hostels with a limited number of inmates developing a community feeling among themselves, and conducting a series of activities of their own through which they learn, would all be more easily possible in the rural centres, where distractions in the environment are likely to be a few and far between. Development of hostels in the rural areas can also serve a fruitful purpose of being utilised for social service activities organised in the rural areas by students in larger cities. On the other hand, the rural students can be helped through larger such hostels to keep up or cultivate self-reliance and healthy habits of living.

Hostels for Women Students

13. Our aforesaid observations will also be applicable to hostels for women students. These are, at present, few and far between. We

have already pointed out how the enrolment of women students in our colleges and universities is now rapidly increasing. We would like to emphasise also the gradual change in society which is coming over during the past few years, as a result of economic development. Many of the women students now-a-days pursue higher education not for getting a degree in order to marry and settle down as house-wives or with a view to cultivating some social graces ; they do so definitely with a view to qualify themselves for careers in their chosen fields. The tendency to seek employment and to continue in it is growing among middle-class women in many of our big cities, and a number of them do not give up employment even after marriage. The qualifications they acquire are thus of considerable significance for their future prospects and many of them would like to avail themselves of the opportunities for residence in order that they may be able to attend to their studies in a proper manner. We think that provision of hostels for them has become an essential need. Where such students have to stay away from the families, the parents are naturally anxious and it is necessary for several reasons to place them under the care of proper educational authorities. Absence of hostel facilities in the case of men students may sometimes lead to their falling back on such alternative residential accommodation as may be available ; but in the case of girls it will generally mean the end of continuation of education itself. It is, therefore, important that hostel facilities for women students are planned in a systematic way and each university is encouraged to initiate and undertake a programme of promoting these facilities.

14. We do not think that in respect of actual functioning of women's hostels, any basically different considerations will hold good. There are, however, one or two points, which we would like to mention briefly. It was generally felt that the conditions in our colleges and universities are not still ripe for locating these hostels together with the boys' hostels; with certain facilities such as dining, games, etc., provided in common. In fact, at a relatively advanced age, that is for post-graduate students, there is little reasons why this cannot be done provided the hostels are located on the campus itself. Experience elsewhere has shown that the living habits and behaviour patterns of both boys and girls undergo significant improvement when they are put together in this manner. The boys become more discrete and responsible and better behaved, the girls more tidy, careful and controlled. We are told of a case of such a hostel actually functioning with good results in the city of Bombay. We, however, feel that it may not be possible nor considered desirable to encourage for some time hostels of this kind in many parts of the country. Women's hostels may be organised as distinct units. Wherever suitable sites are available those hostels should be located on the campus itself.

Role of Warden

15. The key position in a hostel would naturally be occupied by the warden. It was felt by many of us that the warden should as far as possible be a senior teacher capable of commanding respect. While we appreciate this consideration we do not think it need be insisted upon in each case. The interest the warden taken in students and their activities the enthusiasms he shows about guiding them properly are as important a consideration in the choice of the warden as seniority. It may be possible in some cases to have younger people possessed of these qualities and there should be no difficulty in their functioning as wardens.

16. The size of hostel and the number of students the warden is expected to look after is an important matter. Big hostels (accommodating 100 to 200 students) do not provide sufficient opportunity for community life. Because of large numbers there is little chance for exchange of ideas and little mutual understanding. The warden cannot be always familiar with all the inmates and the extent of their participation in the life of the hostel. It is, therefore, necessary to encourage small hostels with limited number of inmates say 50 to 60 wherever possible. Wherever it is not possible, provision should be made for sub-wardens in the hostel so that an individual should not be required to look after, say more than 50 students. At places where it is not possible to have even 50 to 60 students, the hostel may be designed for this number but constructed according to existing requirements and provision made for further expansion. To develop loyalty and a community sense among the inmates, one hostel should be built at some distance from another which should not be less than 100 metres. As far as possible the warden's house should be either a wing of the hostel itself or close to the hostel. Where the hostel is large, it would be desirable to provide residential accommodation for the sub-wardens also either near the hostel or through structural adjustments within the hostel so as to ensure that the aforesaid ratio is achieved. In case there is any difficulty in providing separate residential accommodation for the sub-wardens some rooms in the hostel could be set apart for them. The ratio 50 : 1 would enable the individual functioning as warden to exercise his quasi-parental authority in an effective manner so as to promote a healthy growth of students under his supervision. Gradual improvement of the existing hostels wherever necessary and possible along these lines may materially help the inmates to derive the benefit of corporate living and the hostels may be able to function as effective centres of education in a better and more effective manner. We also recommend that the University Grants Commission should, as a pilot project, assist the universities for the construction of a few houses which would accommodate a senior teacher's family and 10 to 12 students living together as a single family unit with study rooms, and

dormitories for the students and separate study and bed rooms for the teacher's family with suitable structural adjustment to allow the teacher privacy. Many teachers would be very happy to keep some students with them as their wards. Such close contacts will have valuable results in building up the students' character and developing their intellectual outlook.

Financial Assistance

17. We are given to understand that the University Grants Commission at present provides assistance to the extent of 50 per cent for the construction of hostels for boys and 75 per cent for those of girls. In order to over-come the difficulty of the Institutions in securing matching funds we would suggest that the rules for the grant of assistance for the construction of hostels should be liberalised so that the necessity of procuring matching funds is obviated. We would also recommend that liberal assistance should be provided to the institutions which cater to the needs of educationally and socially backward classes to a larger extent.

18. Improvement of the functioning of existing hostels is a minor aspect of the problem. A little financial assistance for providing additional facilities wherever they are necessary, might suffice to tackle this problem. The more difficult problem to our mind is the expansion of hostel facilities. It is here that limited resources would permit only a small measure of additional effort. The problem on the other hand as we have already made clear, is bound to grow acute during the next few years. We therefore, think that the approach adopted hitherto of laying comparatively more emphasis on the development of facilities in universities rather than in Colleges will have to be revised. Since a large majority of students in higher education is accommodated in colleges, an improvement in the conditions of living and working of the colleges should be given an equally high priority ; and schemes for expansion of hostel facilities attached to different collegiate institutions in the light of their needs should be prepared by individual universities. The country is likely to share the recent experience of the United Kingdom of a gradual shift of the university students from their own homes to the Universities-Hall or the City lodgings. Many of these students do not have adequate facilities for study at home. They, therefore, will naturally demand expansion of such facilities in the educational institutions which they join. So far as residential accommodation is concerned, our limited resources on the whole impose serious restrictions on the expansion of such facilities. In utilising limited resources, it may also be useful to realise that residential facilities keep in step with the extent to which academic programmes of institutions concerned attract students from places other than the one in which they are located. It is again clear that housing conditions in the locality concerned will have to be taken into consideration as a relevant factor in granting assistance.

Sometimes, because of their inability to afford expenses of hostel life, students have to live under very poor and unhygienic conditions. This is certainly undesirable and an attempt must be made to provide larger facilities in such places.

Planning of Hostels

19. The Committee is of the opinion that no uniform pattern of hostels can possibly be recommended to cover all the cases. What the Committee would like to emphasise is that the standards of accommodation of dining and sanitary arrangements recommended by the Panel on hostels set up by the University Grants Commission in 1960 should be used norms for guidance in any new construction of hostels. At the same time, the size of the hostels would largely depend upon local conditions.

20. In the metropolitan cities where suitable sites are very few and very expensive, it may be useful to think of larger units with several wardens than smaller units located separately. The land values being high and suitable sites being rare, the use of the available sites for the benefit of small numbers may be uneconomical and wasteful. The position in many of the provincial cities will also be of a similar nature. In the rural areas and in many provincial cities it may still be feasible to experiment with hostels of smaller size, providing a better climate for the growth of community feeling and life. We, therefore, suggest that in such cases experiments may even be made with hostel accommodating 8 to 12 students who live together, cook their food by themselves and derive the benefits of corporate living in a full measure. The latter pattern may also be quite helpful in the case of students working at the postgraduate level. While we fully appreciate the limitations on resources at our disposal, we would like to emphasise the need to realise that environment and living conditions influence the growth of personality and the quality of education a great deal. The conditions at home of a very large majority of students are extremely unsatisfactory with poor and often debasing surroundings. A good many college students, belonging to rural areas, migrate to towns and are obliged to seek accommodation in rather unhealthy and congested localities. Students of different social strata return from their colleges, where they work with the same teacher and in the same class-room, and return to homes which are very dissimilar in physical, cultural and intellectual standards. It is imperative to minimize these differences in the interest of sound education. Education is not merely stuffing the mind of the student with information ; it is an impact of mind on mind and it is also a way of life. A complete programme to remedy the present situation thus called for ; and there should be no hesitation in undertaking it ; for, we believe that investment in the future generations is far more important than investment in some of the material projects undertaken today. We

would, therefore, urge that as large a measure of resources as possible must be utilised for this purpose and even with the rapidly increasing enrolment, an attempt must be made to raise the present percentage of residential accommodation available in our colleges and universities.

21. The Report of the Commission on Higher Education in U.K. popularly known as the Robbins Report in England has elaborately dealt with the problem of residential accommodation for students. Extracts from the Report which have a bearing on this problem are reproduced below :

"In many of the countries we visited, the difficulty of finding suitable lodgings for a growing student population is causing the public authorities to give some priority to the provision of student accommodation. This is not always in halls of residence in France and Scandinavia, for example, many blocks of student flats are now being erected-nor is it always undertaken directly by the public authorities or even at public expense. Moreover, in all countries on which we could obtain information, it seems that the present proportion of students living in accommodation associated with their university or college is less than the proportion in British Universities and in general the effort now being made will only enable them to reach a position similar to that in this country.

The low proportion of students in residence is connected in many countries with the relatively small provision made for assisting students with their maintenance. Apart from the Soviet Union, none of the other countries described in Appendix Five (not enclosed) makes provision from public funds for assisting as high a proportion of students as does Great Britain. Not only is the proportion of those assisted smaller, but in many countries a substantial part of the assistance is given by loan rather than by grant. When students have to pay their own way, whether wholly or in part, it is understandable that they often prefer cheaper arrangements of their own to living in residential accommodation associated with their institution." (Para 122).

"The promotion of social intercourse between teachers and students is desirable. When we return to living accommodation for students we enter the realms of necessity. In 1961-62 28 per cent of students in the universities were living in accommodation associated with the institution they were attending. The proportion of university students provided with residence has remained roughly constant since before the war. The proportion of those living at homes has fallen by over a half (from 42 per cent to 20 per cent) and is still about 1 per cent lower

each year than the year before. The proportion in lodgings has therefore risen sharply (from 33 per cent to 52 per cent) and there is every sign that in most places the limit of available lodgings has now been reached. Indeed, if we consider the nature of some of the lodgings in which circumstances oblige students to live, the distances that they are forced to travel to their work, the lack of privacy-there are cases where three students share one study-bed-rooms-and the absence of any kind of supervision, it can be said that the limit has already been passed. As the general level of prosperity rises, and as more married women go out to work, the number of women willing to earn money by letting lodgings is likely to decline still further. Even without any expansion of student numbers the amount of housing provided by the universities would need to rise.

The expansion we are recommending will make a very great increase in housing provided by universities imperative. We think, that both on educational grounds and on grounds of necessity, provision should be made for a number equivalent to two-thirds of the additional students who will come into the universities to live in accommodation of one kind or another provided by the University.

What we have to recommend for 1980 must not, however, be taken to mean that provision of this accommodation can be spread evenly over the intervening years. It is clear to us that the gravest of all the problems for the universities in the next five years may well be the problem of providing places where students can live. A great expansion of university residence is needed at once". (Paras 587-590)

Students Homes

22. We, however, fully realise that it may not still be possible to meet the requirements of residential requirements of any very large number of our students in the near future. In fact, with the rapid growth of urbanisation the need for wholly residential institutions may itself get reduced. While this is true, we think it is equally important that the need for a quiet place for study would remain a problem as acute as ever in the urban areas and will have to be met through alternative arrangements made by the universities and colleges. There is, at present no standard requirement laid down in respect of reading room accommodation, in college libraries or in those in different universities. At places the reading rooms are over-crowded and a number of students cannot avail themselves of the facility. In our view the reading room facilities can be substantially improved by encouraging colleges and universities to establish 'Students Homes' or 'Day Hostels'. These buildings should provide ample reading seats, small libraries

which may have both text and reference books and a cafeteria which may enable the students to have wholesome food at cheap rates. The idea is that the students who do not have congenial environments for study at home may utilise their time for academic work at such places in proper atmosphere. We are given to understand that the University Grants Commission has already approved a scheme of providing assistance to the universities for the establishment of 'Students Homes' and appreciate the steps taken by the Commission in providing additional reading seats at such places. However, we feel that the location of such 'Homes' should be decided very carefully. As far as possible the 'Home' should be located near the university or college campus. In big cities where the students have to come to the educational institutions from long distances such 'Students Homes' could be located at suitable central places.

STAFF QUARTERS

Need for Expansion

23. We may now turn to the problem of accommodation for teachers. We notice that residential accommodation for teachers in many cases is highly unsatisfactory, specially in mofussil areas. Many promising young men hesitate to accept appointments in mofussil colleges for want of proper residential accommodation. Others resign after working for some time, as they have to cover large distance, wasting a good deal of time and energy in doing so. Again, in fact the very benefits of hostel life tend to get severely restricted if hostels do not permit an opportunity for effective contact between the teacher and the taught. With the provision of residential accommodation, it should also be possible to attract good teachers in the profession and to retain them, thus building corporate life in the university and college campuses. Whenever possible, residential accommodation for teachers near the libraries or laboratories in the campus can be a great boon not only for the teachers but for the students as well. Where teachers live away from the campus, their usefulness necessarily diminishes and the contacts between them and their students become necessarily restricted. We strongly feel that an effort must be made to provide suitable residential accommodation for at least 50 per cent of the teachers in the universities and colleges during the Fourth Five-Year Plan period. This need not all be in the form of individual houses. A suggestion was made to us to consider the feasibility of building small, two or three apartment houses which may be occupied by teachers with small families or by those who are bachelors. As a matter of fact, many of the teachers especially in colleges, when they are young and unmarried, would easily prefer to live in such houses and contribute to the growth of the corporate life in the college or the university. Difficulties of housing in many of the larger cities compel teachers today to live in boarding houses, spending a major portion of

their income merely in lodging and boarding expenses. The frustration resulting from a situation like this, especially when there is none too promising a prospect of any significant improvement in salary scales, is likely to encourage an attitude of indifference or cynicism about his work on the part of the teacher. This will be disastrous to education as such and we are of the definite opinion that this problem requires to be tackled urgently. We understand that the University Grants Commission has already decided to assist the universities towards the construction of Teacher's Hostels and have suggested norms for their guidance. We welcome this step, which will go a long way in relieving the teachers of the difficult housing problem. We suggest that wherever possible some accommodation in each such hostel should be reserved for women lecturers. The building should be so constructed that women's wing should be an independent unit although a part of the same building. One common room or lounge should be provided specially for women but the other amenities of reading room and dining room could be common both for men and women.

24. The University Grants Commission has worked out criteria for minimum facilities for residential quarters of teachers. The criteria relate to quarters of three different kinds, viz., professors, readers and lecturers. The proposals, we believe, were formulated mainly in the context of the university teaching staff. We are of the opinion that the approach now should cover both universities and colleges; and it will be desirable to think in terms of two broad types of quarters—one more commodious than the other. The size of the quarters need not be related to the position of the teacher. He should be free to choose such quarters as he requires for the purposes of his needs, on the basis of reasonable rents fixed by the institutions.

Financial Assistance

25. The Committee considered the question of providing assistance to universities and college for the construction of staff quarters. We feel that it would be better to provide out-right grants to the institutions for the purpose. However, if it is not possible to provide grants to the extent desired, the University Grants Commission may explore the possibility of giving interest free loans to the institutions for the construction of staff quarters. If these loans cannot be advanced directly by the University Grants Commission they may be advanced by the local Governments on the basis of special priorities. Such building loans may also be advanced to permit full-time teachers to build residential quarters of their own on convenient terms. In constructing apartments for teachers it must always be borne in mind that the apartment whether small or large must provide one independent study-room. This requirement usually tends to be over-looked with the result that even an otherwise suitable quarter does not provide facility for independent study.

Rent Chargeable

26. At present the common practice in the institutions is that the teacher provided accommodation is charged rent at the rate of 10 per cent of his salary. With the steady rise in the cost of living and the consequent neutralising effect it has on enhanced salary scales of the teachers the burden of the rent tends to be heavy. We would, therefore, recommend that as in the case of armed forces a subsidised rent may be charged from the teachers also i.e. at the rate of 5 per cent of the salary.

FUTURE POLICY AND PROGRAMME

27. The Committee is aware of the acute housing problem prevailing in the country, which is likely to continue for many years to come on account of the growth of population and limitation of resources. Although considerable efforts have been made towards improving the housing position in the country, attention has mainly been concentrated on housing for industrial and dock labour, village housing and housing for low income group. In fact, during the Third Five-Year Plan the programme of housing construction has been so arranged as to serve specially the requirements of the low income groups within the community. This has been clarified in the Third Five-Year Plan, an extract of which is reproduced below :

“The growth of population, in particular, of the urban population suggests at least three general considerations in relation to the directions in which housing programmes should be developed during the Third and subsequent Five-Year Plans. Firstly, housing policies need to be set in the larger context of economic development and industrialization, both large-scale and small-scale and the problems likely to emerge over the next decade or two. Proposals relating to location and dispersal of industries will, therefore, be of increasing importance in the solution of the housing problem. In the second place, it is necessary to coordinate more closely the efforts of all the agencies concerned whether public, cooperative or private. The need to undertake the preparation of master plans for urban areas becomes all the greater, for without these plans there is no means of bringing together and maximising the contribution of different agencies towards well-defined common objectives pursued systematically over a long period. In the third place conditions have to be created in which the entire programme of housing construction both public and private, must be so oriented that it serves specially the requirements of the low income groups within the community. In working out the housing programme for the Third Plan an attempt has been made to bear these considerations in mind.” (Chapter XXXIII, Para 4).

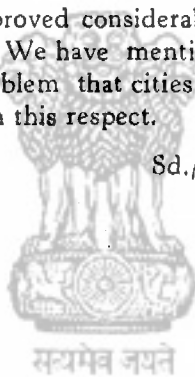
We think that the time has come when the housing problem for students and teachers should be accorded an equally important place in our future planning. We have already dwelt upon the role which suitable residential accommodation for students and teachers plays in the educational development of the country which is very closely linked up with its economic development. We, therefore, suggest that the University Grants Commission may involve the Central Housing Ministry in this project and have a separate allocation made in their provision in the subsequent plans for housing of students and teachers.

28. If a big enough project to provide residential accommodation for nearly 3 lakhs of students and 63 thousand teachers could be taken up within the next six-seven years, we are convinced that it would make an enormous difference to university education. We are aware of the enormous problems, financial as also those of securing the physical resources for implementing such a programme. But we would strongly urge that all difficulties ought to be overcome in order to ensure that while numbers expand rapidly, improvement in the environmental and institutional conditions also continues to keep pace. If for any reason it fails to do so, the results, we are afraid, might easily be disastrous for higher education. We have worked separately the financial implications of such a bold programme (Appendix) and we hope it would be possible for the University Grants Commission to secure the requisite resources in order to implement it during the Fourth Five-Year Plan period. The University Grants Commission may also explore the possibility of setting up a research cell which should continuously examine both technically and administratively how the cost of residential buildings in institutions of higher education could be reduced without sacrifice of quality, strength or convenience.

29. We are aware that the submission made by us in our Report by themselves would only mean creation of some of the essential conditions for improvement in the quality of education. A large number of other steps would also be necessary if actual improvements in any substantial measure are to be realised. Suggestions like provision of special rooms to teachers in college buildings, cubicals in the libraries and the laboratories, book purchase grants to teachers in order to enable them to build their own collections of literature in their own fields, provision for the training of younger teachers in the vocation, and so on, were made to the Committee. Some of these are being tried in a few universities, others have still to be tried. But we do think that unless the teacher has a congenial atmosphere both in the institution as well as at home for continuing to be a student himself, it would not be possible for him to discharge his function in a satisfactory manner.

30. Any implementation of a programme of the kind we have outlined will present serious difficulties, especially in the metropolitan cities.

We think that the problems of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras or Delhi would require a very special consolidated attack in order that they may be solved satisfactorily. We notice that the facilities for residential accommodation available in some of these cities are very unsatisfactory. And the difficulties in securing suitable sites for purposes of new construction do not permit any very large expansion of the amenities the kind of which we have mentioned in the Report. It is only the fullest cooperation on the part of the State Governments and the Municipal authorities that might make this problem tractable in so far as securing of suitable sites in these places is concerned. There are and will always be, a large number of competing claims for them, but in assessing the relative significance of these claims we would like to emphasise that education ought to be given a very high priority. If that is done and the needs of colleges and universities are sympathetically considered, we do not think the problem is insoluble in any sense. Solutions can be found and can be implemented through special grants from the University Grants Commission so that university life in these cities may be brought to its normal functioning, where conditions for such functioning do not exist at the moment or may be improved considerably where it has not deviated very far from normalcy. We have mentioned this only to emphasise that there is a special problem that cities like Calcutta, Bombay, etc. present to the authorities in this respect.



Sd./- M.S. Mehta
P.T. Chandi
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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

STUDENT HOSTELS

Efforts should be made to maintain the present proportion of students provided with hostel accommodation. If possible this proportion should be increased in the years to come (Para 6).

2. Since the physical environments of the residence exert a powerful influence on the character and attitude of the individual, the planning of a hostel should be efficient, logical and pleasant. The building should be so planned that it provides for quiet individual work and for the growth of community feeling (Para 7).

3. To realise the full benefit of hostel life, different wards of the hostel may be organized on the basis of 'houses' and 'fraternities' (Para 8).

4. The local authorities or the State Governments may be persuaded to grant exemption of ground rents and reduction of rates and taxes on the hostels which will ultimately reduce the hostel fees charged from the students (Para 10. a).

5. The expenditure on hostels should be treated as an admissible item of grant for the universities and colleges (Para 10. b).

6. The schedule of hostel fees should be adjusted in a way as can provide for rent free accommodation to about 5 to 10 per cent of the students living in hostels who could be selected on the basis of merit (Para 10. c).

7. Effort should be made to provide hostel accommodation to about 75 per cent of the students in institutions of All-India character. The possibility of granting financial aid to students in these hostels to cover all their expenses may also be explored (Para 10. d).

8. Certain types of work in the hostel may be distributed among the students on payment of small remuneration and a 'mutual assistance fund' started in the hostels for the benefit of needy students (Para 10. e).

9. Every hostel should have essential provisions like sick room, indoor games, reading room and a place for congregation for purposes other than intellectual and academic (Para 10. f).

10. The hostels should have common kitchens and common messes. The messes should be organised on co-operative basis (Para 10. g).

11. The University Grants Commission should provide grants for the renovation of existing hostel buildings (Para 10. h).

12. Some senior students may assist the Warden in supervision the hostel in return for some remuneration (Para 10. i).

13. The hostels for postgraduate students should be planned differently from those of undergraduate so as to provide proper facilities for a congenial environment and for a quiet place for study (Para 11).

14. On account of the growth of collegiate education in the rural areas the accommodation problem for both students and teachers requires greater attention and suitable grants should be provided by both State Governments and the University Grants Commission on liberal scale for this purpose (Para 12).

15. With the spread of education among middle-class women a large provision for hostels for them has become essential and should be planned in a systematic way. The universities should be encouraged to undertake a programme of promoting these facilities (Para 13).

16. It is not desirable at this stage to encourage common hostels for men and women. Women hostels may be organised as distinct units and wherever possible located on the campus (Para 14).

17. The warden may not necessarily be a senior teacher. If a junior teacher possesses requisite qualities, there should be no bar in his functioning as warden of the hostel (Para 15).

18. As big hostels do not provide sufficient opportunities for enough contact, small hostels of say 50-60 seats may be encouraged. However, where it is not possible provision should be made for sub-warden. The warden's and sub-warden's house should be located either in the hostel itself or close to the hostel. The University Grants Commission should assist the universities for the construction of houses which may accommodate senior teacher and about 10-12 students living together as a single family (Para 16).

19. The University Grants Commission should liberalise the rules for the grant of assistance for the construction of hostels so as to obviate the necessity of procuring matching funds (Para 17).

20. The approach of comparatively more emphasis on university hostels hitherto adopted should be revised and improvements in the living conditions of college hostels given an equally high priority (Para 18).

21. It is not possible to lay down a uniform pattern of hostels for all cases. The norms and standard of accommodation of dining and sanitary arrangements suggested by the University Grants Commission panel on hostels should be kept in view as guiding principles (Para 19).

22. In the rural areas and provincial cities hostels accommodating 8-12 students who live together, cook their food themselves may be set up on experimental basis (Para 20).

STUDENTS HOMES

23. In order to provide facilities to students for quiet study the universities and colleges should be encouraged to establish 'Students Homes' or 'Day Hostels' which should provide reading accommodation and have small library and cafeteria (Para 22).

STAFF QUARTERS

24. Steps should be taken to provide residential accommodation for 50 per cent of the teachers in universities and colleges by the end of the Fourth Plan (Para 23).

25. The houses for teachers may be of two types and the accommodation provided need not be related to the position of the teacher (Para 24).

26. It would be preferable to provide outright grants to universities and colleges for the construction of staff quarters. If grants to the extent necessary are not feasible, interest free loans may be given by the University Grants Commission or the local Governments. Such loans may be given to teachers for building houses on convenient terms (Para 25).

27. For the residential accommodation provided by the institution to the teachers a subsidised rent @ 5 per cent of the salary may be charged as in the case of armed forces (Para 26).

28. The University Grants Commission may involve the Central Ministry of the Works and Housing in the programmes of residential accommodation for students and teachers (Para 27).

29. The University Grants Commission may consider setting up of a research cell for examining the methods through which the cost of building could be reduced (Para 28).

APPENDIX

Estimated expenditure required for providing (a) students hostels for 25 per cent of the students in universities and colleges and (b) Staff quarters (including teachers' hostels) for 50 per cent of the teachers in universities and colleges.

(a)

STUDENTS' HOSTELS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The percentage of students at the university stage residing in hostel in 1962-63 | 18 |
| 2. Number of additional seats required to raise the proportion of students living in hostels from 18 per cent to 25 per cent at the end of the 3rd Plan period. | $\frac{7 \times 15 \text{ lakhs}}{100}$ 1.05 lakhs |
| 3. Number of seats required for the additional enrolment of 8 lakhs expected during the 4th Plan period at the rate of 25 per cent | 2.00 lakhs |
| 4. Total number of additional seats required by the end of Fourth Plan. | 3.05 lakhs or
3.00 lakhs. (rounded) |
| 5. Total cost at the rate of Rs. 4,000/- per seat | Rs. 120.00 crores (i) |

(b)

STAFF QUARTERS (including Teachers' Hostels)

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Total estimated enrolment at university stage by the end of the Third Plan. | 15.00 lakhs |
| 2. Total number of teachers at the end of the Third Plan (with student-teacher ratio of 1 : 16 as in 1962-63) | 94,000 (Approx.) |
| 3. Total number of staff quarters available in 1962-63. | 9,000 (Approx.) |
| 4. Number of additional teachers during 4th Plan (on the basis of eight lakhs additional students and student-teacher ratio at 1 : 16). | 50,000 |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5. Total number of housing units required by the end of the 4th Plan for 50 per cent of the teachers. | $\frac{94,000+50,000}{2}$ $= 72,000$ |
| 6. Additional housing unit to be constructed. | $72,000-9,000$ $= 63,000$ |
| 7. Number of teachers' hostels (hostels and staff quarters in the ratio of 30 : 70) each hostel accommodating 22 teachers on average. | $\frac{18,900}{22}$
859
or 900 (rounded) |
| 8. Staff quarters | 44,100
or 44,000 (rounded) |
| 9. Cost of 900 hostels at the rate of Rs. 3 lakhs per hostel. | Rs. 27.00 crores |
| 10. Cost of 44,000 staff quarters at the rate of Rs. 25,000/- per quarter approximately. | Rs. 110.00 crores |
| Grand total for students' hostels and staff quarters. (i) plus (ii) | Rs. 137.00 crores (ii)
Rs. 257.00 crores |





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